

**Washington, D.C.** - Working with local mayors and school boards from North Chicago, Highland Park and Glenview, Congressman Mark Kirk introduced *H.R. 4972, Protecting Impact Aid for North Suburban Schools*, to guarantee federal education 'heavy impact' aid to North Chicago Schools and to increase federal aid for Highwood, Highland Park and Glenview schools.

Senators Durbin and Obama joined Kirk and will introduce a Senate companion bill.

"We are taking this action to guarantee federal education impact aid for the 4,000 students in North Chicago schools. Our bill will also increase aid for Glenview, Highwood and Highland Park schools," Kirk said. "Senators Durbin and Obama joined this bipartisan effort to work on providing aid to these schools."

Under Kirk's legislation, children from military families attending Highwood, Highland Park and Glenview schools will be officially counted in North Chicago School District's Impact Aid numbers. The move will allow North Chicago to maintain the 30 percent military student threshold required to retain 'heavy impact' aid status. Under an agreement to be negotiated between the communities, North Chicago would reimburse a portion of the Impact Aid payments received from the military students to the school districts where the children were actually attending. With military students at all school districts being counted at the 'heavily impacted' rate, the arrangement creates a financial win for all communities.

Kirk's legislation comes as the Navy reviews a public-private partnership to upgrade homes for military families in North Chicago, Highland Park and Glenview. Last year the Congressman worked with the Navy to dramatically reduce the number of military homes to be built in Glenview and Highwood/Highland Park, while increasing the number of homes in North Chicago. Due to the federal Impact Aid formulas, Kirk's action dramatically improved the education funding for all three school districts.

Under current law, federally-owned military homes cannot be taxed by states. The Impact Aid program reimburses school districts educating military children. North Chicago receives over \$6,000 per military student in Impact Aid funding due to their ‘heavy impact’ status. Highland Park and Glenview receive on average \$600 per student due to far fewer military children attending their schools.

Last November, North Chicago school leaders reported they fell below the 30 percent military child threshold jeopardizing their ‘heavy impact’ aid status and threatening their financial solvency.

Working with the Department of Education (DOE), Kirk secured an agreement from Education Secretary Margaret Spellings to protect ‘heavy impact’ aid to schools as long as the new Navy public-private housing project continued. If the project moves forward, heavy impact aid for North Chicago school children will be protected until 2011.

Kirk’s success in securing funding for North Chicago schools averted a funding crisis and allowed him to work with the local communities and Senators’ Durbin and Obama on the long term solution proposed in the new bipartisan bill.

